

VZCZCXRO5332
PP RUEHMA RUEHROV
DE RUEHKH #2254/01 2601317
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 171317Z SEP 06
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4579
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 002254

SIPDIS

AIDAC
SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/SPG, PRM, AND ALSO PASS USAID/W
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM, AFR/SP
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA, USAID/REDSO, AND FAS
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
NAIROBI FOR SFO
NSC FOR JBRAUSE, NSC/AFRICA FOR TSHORTLEY
USUN FOR TMALY
BRUSSELS FOR PLERNER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREF](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR - NORTH DARFUR SITUATION REPORT

REF: KHARTOUM 1982

KHARTOUM 00002254 001.2 OF 002

Summary

11. (U) Beginning in May 2006, inaccessibility sharply increased in much of North Darfur for humanitarian workers. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has estimated that fighting and insecurity have displaced approximately 25,000 individuals since June. USAID reports that all humanitarian assistance programs have been affected by insecurity. However, many USAID partners persist in their efforts to provide life-saving services in conflict-affected areas. End Summary.

Operating Environment

12. (U) Since late July 2006, many locations have become completely inaccessible, including Saraf Omra and surrounding villages; rural Kabkabiya; Tawila town and surrounding areas; and Dar Zagawa, which is the area stretching from Kulkul to the border with Chad and Libya. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) reported that locations with sporadic access include Fata Borno, Kassab IDP camp, Hashaba area, Korma, and Kafod. USAID reports that shelter, water, and sanitation sectors have been severely affected by inaccessibility. Due to the lack of humanitarian services, USAID's Darfur Field Office (USAID/DFO) staff report that populations in Tawila, Mellit, and Sayeh locations are likely to be the most vulnerable.

13. (U) According to UN sources, 16 humanitarian vehicles were hijacked and 10 Sudanese NGO staff killed since May 2006 in Darfur. By contrast, from January to April of 2006, there were no aid workers killed in North Darfur. This disturbing trend has impacted NGO staff movements, staff morale, and relationships with internally displaced persons (IDPs) and communities within which the humanitarian community works.

14. (U) OCHA has reported that many IDPs increasingly perceive the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to be aligned with the Sudanese government, which complicates the relationship between AMIS and humanitarian agencies.

¶5. (SBU) UN sources communicate daily with the armed groups operating in North Darfur and use the information to provide security briefs for the humanitarian community, including the status of "Go" and "No Go" zones. USAID staff observe that the UN briefings provide NGOs with accurate, relevant information, which has for the most part prevented NGOs from being accidentally caught in fighting. To negotiate humanitarian access, NGOs must now contact four Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) groups, the National Redemption Front (NRF), the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and several other smaller factions. Back in May 2006, NGOs only needed security guarantees from one SLA group and the HAC.

¶6. (SBU) Due to the growing presence of armed combatants in the camps, NGOs have received increased reports of sexual assaults, attacks, and shootings. Additionally, NGOs have reported increased evidence that the IDP camps where they work are becoming havens for former combatants.

Status of USAID Programs

¶7. (U) As a result of increased insecurity, all USAID implementing partners have suspended at least one activity in North Darfur. However, Sudanese staff have maintained essential health, food, and nutrition programs in remote locations even when expatriate staff have been relocated to El Fasher.

¶8. (SBU) The Tawila health center, operated by Relief International (RI) with USAID funding, continues to serve the needs of the Tawila community despite significant fighting in the area. As part of RI's capacity building programs, they trained staff from Tawila in basic health provider skills. While RI expatriate staff have been unable to travel to Tawila since August 2006, inhibiting program monitoring, basic level health services continue.

KHARTOUM 00002254 002.2 OF 002

¶9. (SBU) The area surrounding Kutum town, located northwest of El Fasher, has been the site of heavy fighting in late August and early September 2006. NGOs are unable to travel by road to reach Kutum and instead rely on helicopter transport to move staff and supplies. Persevering under difficult security conditions, USAID partner GOAL continues to deliver basic health services. When security deteriorated, GOAL relocated international staff to El Fasher and restricted vehicle movement to inside the city limits. By using helicopter transport and a community-based approach to program delivery, GOAL has been able to continue providing basic humanitarian services in rural locations, even in close proximity to fighting. GOAL staff noted that negotiating access to areas under control of armed groups becomes more complex as additional players are added to the mix.

¶10. (SBU) Throughout July and August 2006, USAID partner International Rescue Committee (IRC) has maintained water and sanitation programs for more than 35,000 beneficiaries in Kutum and Kassab IDP camp. Like RI, the IRC-managed clinics in Hashaba, a village located north of El Fasher, are now run by trained community volunteers, with minimal support from IRC staff based in El Fasher. IRC continues to operate a health clinic in Abu Shouk camp, a justice center in Zam Zam camp, and a women's center, also in Zam Zam camp. IRC will assume the camp coordination role for As Salaam camp and currently operates a 24-hour health clinic there. These services are ongoing, though have been scaled back in non-urban areas.

¶11. (SBU) As a result of insecurity, USAID partner CHF International reported that its activities in the western part of North Darfur are now limited to Kabkabiya town, forcing it to cut back activities in other areas. In Zam Zam IDP camp, south of El Fasher, CHF International has been able to provide farmers with agricultural tools and seeds.

¶12. (U) The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) continues to work with Government of National Unity (GNU) institutions such as the Office

of Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES) and the State Ministry of Health (SMOH) to implement programs in remote areas including Wadaa, Dar Salaam, Muzbat, and Birmaza. UNICEF continues to work in areas where fighting has occurred. UNICEF reported that their implementing partners continue to effectively provide assistance in repairing water pumps, training water committees, rebuilding and equipping health centers, even in non-GNU held areas. USAID/DFO staff note that UNICEF's work is now carried out with less monitoring, but appears to be effective and provides indispensable services to affected communities.

¶13. (U) The UN World Food Program (WFP) reported that while enough food aid commodities are stocked in warehouses, agencies have been unable to distribute it due to insecurity in Dar Zaghawa and Kutum districts since May 2006.

Comments

¶14. (U) In USAID's estimation, the humanitarian response for the 25,000 newly displaced IDPs in July was adequate and demonstrated the ability of the humanitarian community to quickly and efficiently mount a response.

¶15. (U) USAID/DFO staff note that implementing partners are limited in their ability to monitor programs outside of El Fasher and some activities have been scaled back. However, the activities continue to serve vulnerable populations under challenging security situations.

¶16. (U) The humanitarian community in North Darfur remains poised to offer humanitarian assistance in as many areas as possible for as long as the security situation allows. USAID staff note that the current NGOs in Darfur have sufficient capacity at the moment to respond to the current needs for new IDPs.

HUME